

just what is in the best interests of the United States and our allies, and how are we more likely to achieve a military end to a conflict. They would also have to factor in whether or not such an action would violate the Rome Statute.

Let me also say, our nuclear doctrine rests on deterrence, and if the Russians were to attack us or to launch, we would destroy Russian cities. How would that fit into a Rome Statute world?

Ambassador SCHEFFER. Congressman, this statute, as I said, specifically provides very high barriers that have to be met.

Mr. SMITH. But crimes of aggression aren't even defined yet.

Ambassador SCHEFFER. And it is contrary to U.S. Federal law as well as the Uniform Code of Military Justice to violate the laws of war. So I would assume the plan or policy of the United States would not be to violate the laws of war. If it were the plan or policy to violate the laws of war, then we have a lot to answer for. But if it is not the policy to violate the laws of war, there should be symmetry between our actions and what has been set forth in the statute, which we agree with.

We agree that the crimes set forth in the statute are crimes under customary international law which we must adhere to. We are not disagreeing with what is in the statute in terms of the list of crimes, we agree with them. They must be complied with.

Mr. SMITH. And again, signing a document that still has not defined crimes of aggression—

Ambassador SCHIFFER. And by the way, I noticed that in your opening statement, I did want to get back to you on that. The whole process in the Preparatory Commission now is to try to determine, can there be a definition for aggression? The crime of aggression is not actionable under the statute unless there has been an agreement among the states parties to the statute at the 7-year review conference as to what is the definition of that crime. So you can't—there is no way to prosecute that crime until such a definition has been arrived at. And we have a very significant coalition of governments in total agreement with us as to how to proceed in those talks to define the crime of aggression.

Interestingly enough, under the statute, if one is a state party to the statute, you have every right, if a new crime is added to the statute, to completely exclude yourself from the coverage of that crime.

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Mr. SMITH. Mr. Slocombe, Secretary Slocombe, if you could respond to the hypothetical posed earlier about not just our deterrence strategy, which is based on the obliteration of cities, unless something has changed there that I don't know about, but also the bombing of Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the firebombing that took place in Germany. If the Rome Statute were in effect, would that have precluded those actions?

Mr. SLOCOMBE. Mr. Smith, I think the way I would answer that would be to say that, in our view, if the Rome Statute were properly applied, American military personnel or the political officers, the President and, I guess in those cases, the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy who ordered operations could not properly be prosecuted under them because they were legitimate. In the case of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and, indeed, in general, with respect to the strategic bombing campaign against both Japan and Germany with conventional weapons, I would maintain that, judged by the context in which they occurred, they were not violations of the law of war under any circumstances.

So that, as a lawyer, the way I would answer the question would be that the United

States would have a good defense if such cases were, in your case, hypothetically tried.

What I am concerned about, what the United States is concerned about, is that there could be a politically motivated prosecution based on what would, in our view, be a misinterpretation of the law of war, and, therefore, a misinterpretation of the Rome Statute. And once one is in a court, once you concede the principle of jurisdiction, there are no guarantees as to the result.

Mr. SMITH. So it would be possible that a Hiroshima, Nagasaki type action or the firebombing in Japan and in Germany could be prosecuted in the future if such a thing were—

Mr. SLOCOMBE. As we have said repeatedly, our concern in respect of this statute, in respect of the Court, is precisely the concern about politically motivated, in effect, bad faith prosecutions. Exactly.

Mr. SMITH. But what about a good faith prosecution, by someone who honestly believed that Hiroshima was a war crime? I mean it is possible that it could happen?

Mr. SLOCOMBE. Well, there is no question that on its face, the Court has jurisdiction over actual "war crimes". That is what the statute says, that is what is intended. Our concern, the United States military, through the United States military justice system, prosecutes and prosecutes vigorously well-founded allegations that American military personnel have violated the law of war.

We do not need the International Criminal Court to deal with that problem. So that is a non-problem. Our concern is not that there would be valid prosecutions of American military personnel. Our concern, rather, is as I said, and as we had said repeatedly, our concern is with politically motivated prosecutions based not really on serious allegations of war crimes, but on disagreement with U.S. or other alliance policies, of which I think the rejected allegations with respect to Kosovo are a good example.

Mr. SMITH. Could I ask, and ask you to provide it for the record, that the Pentagon undertake an analysis as to whether or not Rome would apply to World War II actions like I mentioned before?

Ambassador Scheffer, I think if these other issues were ironed out, you probably would like to see us sign this. But we have got to know what we are heading toward, and we need to look back before we look forward. Such an analysis, if it hasn't been done, really should be done.

Mr. SLOCOMBE. It has been done, that is the reason we opposed the treaty.

Mr. SMITH. What has been done, a look back at past conflicts?

Mr. SLOCOMBE. Well, I don't know that anyone did it in the mind of saying Dresden could have been prosecuted, I think they did it in the mind of saying you don't have to go back to World War II or to the Vietnam War to say that there is a very real danger that there could be politically motivated prosecutions through the International Criminal Court, and that is precisely the reason that not just the Department of Defense, but the Administration voted against the text and have refused to sign the treaty.

Mr. SMITH. And Ambassador Scheffer, you agree with that, there could be politically motivated prosecutions?

Ambassador SCHEFFER. Precisely.

Mr. SMITH. I'm sorry?

Ambassador SCHEFFER. Yes. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. Do you, Ambassador Scheffer, personally think that President Clinton made a mistake when he decided against signing the treaty in 1998?

Your mike is not on.

Ambassador SCHEFFER. I'm sorry, Congressman. My answer to your other questions was yes.

Mr. SMITH. OK. Thank you.

Ambassador SCHEFFER. No, there was no mistake whatsoever. In fact, the issue of signing was simply not the issue. In Rome it was, do we agree with other governments to release the text of the statute out of the Rome Conference in the form that existed at the end of the conference? That was the only issue there.

It truly is a more responsible course to take not to consider even the issue of signing until one sees the totality of this treaty regime.

Mr. SLOCOMBE. If I could, Mr. Chairman, could I read a sentence from a letter which Secretary Cohen, with the concurrence of his colleagues in the senior levels of the Administration, sent in support of Ambassador Scheffer's effort, which responds exactly to your point? It reads, "As it currently stands, the Rome Treaty could expose servicemembers and Government officials of nonparty states to criminal liability based on politically motivated charges brought by other states that object to the nonparty states' international policies." That is our position and that, in a sentence, is the reason for our concerns.

Mr. SMITH. Let me ask a final question or two. Ambassador Scheffer, how likely do you really think it is that you will succeed in your efforts to get the ICC to forego criminal jurisdiction over Americans and persons from other countries that are not a party to the Rome Statute? And what happens if you fail? Obviously there are a different set of diplomats and parliamentarians that I was meeting with, but at the Bucharest Conference we were all alone in our opposition. I was amazed in speaking one-on-one during the course of the week in Bucharest at the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly at how Pollyanna-ish some of the views were of members who did not have a clue what was contained in the statute but just said "We want an ICC and that is it." The British were probably more emphatic than anyone, although they seem to have been informed and knew the contents of the statute. They were vigorously pushing for rapid ratification, which is what the operative language was that they were offering.

The Germans offered it. We tried to weaken it with an amendment and it was not acceptable, regrettably. It seems as if, as Mr. Bereuter pointed out earlier, in terms of a willingness to just cede sovereignty, the Europeans have no problem with that, it seems. But obviously we do.

What is the next step if they do not include us—or exclude us, I should say—from jurisdiction? What would be the next step?

Ambassador SCHEFFER. Well, I think there will be some—let me just describe it as serious results if we cannot prevail with a provision or a document that is satisfactory to us in the Preparatory Commission talks.

I think as Under Secretary Slocombe said earlier we are going to have to take a very serious reassessment of this. I think there is going to be a clearer assessment as to what we can consider in terms of military contingencies for this Government, but at the same time I would hope that that assessment could, the fact that there would be such an assessment would encourage a good number of governments, particularly our allies, that they have far more to gain from this process from the United States being a cooperative partner in this Treaty, even as a nonparty, than they do to isolate us by not taking into consideration the very specific requirements that we have in the international community, so all I can say is I hope I can succeed.

I don't want to pretend to say that I have got an easy job ahead of me. Right now the deck is stacked against me, but we have to try. This is a step-by-step process. We have